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ALLNEWS

7/17/94 NOTPCN D8

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Sunday, July 17, 1994

LIVING

PICTURE FROM THE PAST
JOHN BURKE

Rear Adm. Howard L. Vickery (third from right), vice-chairman of the U.S. Maritime Commission, praised shipyards for their record-breaking construction jobs when he spoke at the launching of the S.S. George W. Alther at Delta Shipyards on the Industrial Canal on May 22, 1944.

"There is no more vital part of war production than your assignment," he told shipyard workers. "For battles are won by men, equipment and supplies and yet all three of these would be of little use without transportation to deliver them to the battlefronts."

The Alther's sponsor was 4-year-old Sari Earlyn Berman, daughter of First Officer Saul H. Berman, who was lost at sea. She received the Mariner's Medal, awarded posthumously to her father, who was from Vickery. Also present at the ceremony was Berman's widow, Ethel. At right are Midshipmen Joseph Cull and Louis Ebert, this week's contributor. Cull now resides in Covington.

Alther, merchant marine officer from Dorchester, Mass., was killed in action off Sicily during an attempt to rescue a fellow officer when the ship he was on was set afire by a direct bomb hit during World War II.

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1944: Ship launched at Delta in memory of war hero
PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF LOUIS HART EBERT

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ALLNEWS

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Sunday, August 14, 1994

LIVING

PICTURE FROM THE PAST
John Burke

Looking back at the launchings

During the World War II years, Woodrow Wilson Stansbury (right) witnessed the launching of 187 out of 188 liberty ships during four years and 23 days of employment at Delta Shipyards on the Industrial Canal. "The only one I didn't see launched was the Gallagher - I was at the doctor's that time," he said.

Stansbury, a foreman, supervised the scaffolding around the ships for the welders and other workmen. At right he is shown pressing the button to launch the Sieur de la Salle.

The vessel he found to be the most memorable was the Tobias Stansbury, launched July 14, 1943. Woodrow Stansbury was on board. "Go see your ship launched," he remembers his superintendent, who had noticed the common surnames, telling him. "What ship?," Stansbury asked, not having heard the name. The vessel was named for a U.S. military hero (1757-1849) who commanded the Baltimore Brigade at the Battle of Bladensburg during the War of 1812. "My cousin in Morgan City made a family tree. He said the first Stansbury landed in Boston, Mass., and that we're all kin," he said.

Woodrow Stansbury had a rough moment on the deck of the Stansbury. "I was scared. If you look at the ship, you'll see a gun mount at the front. When the ship slid down, I looked over and it looked like the gun mount was coming at me."

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PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF WOODROW WILSON STANSBURY

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Sunday, April 16, 1995

LIVING

PICTURE FROM THE PAST

John Burke

1943: Shipyard workers struggled to stay afloat in war years

"It was World War II, a very dark and busy time for everyone," writes Cleve Guidry of Slidell. "My dad and his fellow workers were pulling 12- to 16-hour shifts and this went on for the duration, including Sundays."

Guidry's father, Anicet "Lick" Guidry, is the man seated on the extreme left. The photograph was taken Jan. 16, 1943, at Delta Shipyards on the Industrial Canal.

"Everything that was considered luxury was rationed, like gas and tires, and the defense workers pooled rides to and from work," said the younger Guidry. "There were no overpasses and underpasses to make the trip to and from Delta, so the workers were delayed daily by busy freight trains carrying war equipment and supplies."

The elder Guidry turned to the carpentry field after the war and retired in 1963. He died in 1979 at the age of 81. His son does not recall the names of the other men in the photograph.

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PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF ANICET C. "CLEVE" GUIDRY

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